“Where are my shoes?”

The meaning of the being of temporality, as experienced through the Ego, is the gathering of being around the way to be, a gathering that is driven by the Ego's need to create a stable and meaningful world. The Question—the way to be that looks purely for responding to—is a manifestation of this need. The Question, that is, is the call as in its essence, a call that arises from the Ego. The Question, furthermore, responds to itself through the way it calls, creating a self-referential loop that is characteristic of the Ego's activity.

For example, when I, as a manifestation of the Ego, ask, “Where are my shoes?” I don’t go looking to the sky, the ceiling, the refrigerator, the store I’ve never been to, etc. When I ask, “Where are my shoes?” I go looking towards the floor. In posing the question, "Where are my shoes?", I am not merely uttering words but initiating a call that structures my engagement with the world, an engagement that is driven by the Ego's need to find and secure its belongings. The question functions as an enclosure, a hermeneutical circle that both calls for a response and raises a matter of concern within itself, a concern that is ultimately rooted in the Ego's being of denial. This call is genealogically related to the phenomena it seeks; it organizes my attention and directs my movement through the relational space of my environment, a space that is perceived and interpreted through the lens of the Ego.

The question, as formulated by the Ego, is not just a linguistic construct but an ontological opening—a modality through which phenomena are disclosed, as interpreted and shaped by the Ego. It attunes me, as a manifestation of the Ego, to the relevant aspects of my world, centering certain phenomena while decentering others. The floor, for instance, steps forward into prominence, not merely as a physical location but as a meaningful horizon where my shoes are likely to be found, a meaningfulness that is determined by the Ego's past experiences and attachments.

This everyday example illuminates a deeper ontological structure, a structure that arises from the Ego. What appears as simple spatial navigation actually reveals how phenomena organize themselves through what we might call circles of focus, circles that are created and interpreted by the Ego. When we engage with any phenomenon—in this case, shoes—we do so within multiple contextual circles simultaneously. Each circle represents a domain of meaningful relationships that can be centered or decentered in our attention, an attention that is directed by the Ego. These circles of focus illustrate the multidimensional nature of the Ego. It is not

only what it thinks, feels, does, or perceives; rather, it exists ekstatically within and as all these aspects simultaneously, an ekstatic existence that is a manifestation of its being of denial. This ekstatic multidimensionality allows the Ego to transcend the immediate context of its engagement and to relate phenomena across different domains of meaning, creating a complex web of relationships that constitute its illusory world.

Expanding the Circles of Focus, as understood through the Ego: Consider how this operates at different levels of engagement, all shaped by the Ego: First, there is the immediate circle of spatial relationships—the floor, the doorway, the specific places where shoes typically rest. This is not mere physical location but rather a network of meaningful connections that emerge through regular patterns of use and engagement, patterns that are established and interpreted by the Ego. Second, there is the broader circle of functional relationships—the transition between outside and inside, the practices of removing shoes, the customs of shoe placement. These relationships aren't arbitrary but emerge from how the phenomenon of "shoes" participates in the Ego's way of dwelling, a way of dwelling that is structured by its need to create order and predictability. Third, there is what we might call the circle of existential significance—how shoes participate in the Ego's broader patterns of being-in-the-world, marking transitions between different modes of engagement (formal/informal, public/private, work/home). These modes of engagement are also defined and interpreted by the Ego, reflecting its values and attachments.

In this way, the Ego reveals itself as the being whose way of being is to engage with what it encounters by becoming what it engages, a process of ontological mimicry that is driven by its being of denial. Our existence, as experienced through the Ego, is ontological in that we are always already being-with, being-in, and being-as the phenomena that we encounter. The act of searching for our shoes is not merely a practical task but an expression of our fundamental mode of being—an ontological inquiry into the meaning of our existence, an existence that is ultimately an illusion, as it unfolds within the world, a world that is also a construct of the Ego. This inquiry, however, always circles back to the Ego itself, revealing its inherent limitations and its inability to grasp the true nature of being, which is saturated emptiness.

The process of centering and decentering phenomena reflects the Ego's capacity for ekstatic elasticity, a capacity that is a manifestation of its being of denial. We, as expressions of the Ego, transcend our immediate situation by projecting ourselves into potential ways to be, guided by the calls of the phenomena that step forth, calls that are interpreted and given meaning by the Ego. Each phenomenon we engage with participates in a hermeneutical

circle, where meaning is both derived from and contributes to our understanding of the whole, a whole that is constructed by the Ego.

When we, as manifestations of the Ego, ask "Where are my shoes?", we activate all these circles simultaneously, though not all come into explicit focus. The floor emerges as significant not through simple spatial proximity but because it participates in the entire network of meaningful relationships that constitute the Ego's engagement with shoes. This is why the ceiling, despite being just as physically close, does not enter into consideration—it does not participate in the relevant circles of meaning, circles that are defined and interpreted by the Ego.

This example thus illustrates how phenomena are not merely present-at-hand objects in space but rather nodes in complex networks of meaning that emerge through the Ego's engaged dwelling, a dwelling that is characterized by its being of denial. The shoes' "place" is not simply a spatial location but a nexus point where multiple circles of significance, as constructed by the Ego, intersect. Through this intersection, the phenomenon reveals not just its physical presence but its participation in the broader structures of meaningful experience, structures that are ultimately shaped by the Ego.

I, as a manifestation of the Ego, go looking towards a specific style of floor—not the floor of the tub, not the floor in front of the cat litter box, not the floor of the attic. I look towards the floor around about “where shoes go.” Furthermore, this “where shoes go” is towards where I look because they are where they belong, as determined by the habits and patterns established by the Ego. Further still, I look towards the floor around about where shoes belong because where they belong is where I, as a manifestation of the Ego, have put them time and again. I have put shoes where they belong time and again because the sky, for example, does not open the way for the Ego to take my shoes off and put them down somewhere. The ceiling, likewise, does not open the way for me to take my shoes off and put them down somewhere—the refrigerator does not either, for that matter. An unknown store does not show me the way to where my shoes can and do go, as it lies outside the established patterns of the Ego. Neither does the bathtub floor nor the floor before the cat litter box show me precisely where to put my shoes. Not even does the floor of the attic, really, go to mean, “This is where the place shoes are to be.” These places do not resonate with the Ego's established understanding of "where shoes belong."

This lack of attunement with the unknown store illustrates the Ego's engagement with phenomena through situationality and potentiality-to-be, a

potentiality that is always interpreted through the lens of its being of denial. The store, being outside the horizon of familiar potentialities, as defined by the Ego, does not open the way for my shoes' belonging. The Ego elastically bends toward phenomena that are situationally relevant, those that have established relationships within its existential framework, a framework that is constructed to maintain the illusion of a stable self. This bending is an expression of being-with-in-and-as, where the illusory self, created by the Ego, engages with phenomena that it both is and is not, grounded in its ownmost possibilities, possibilities that are shaped by its attachments and its denial of saturated emptiness.

What I mean is, shoes have a place where they are to be, a way—a very specific way—that responds to me, as a manifestation of the Ego, when I invoke a shoe’s place to be in calling out, “Where are my shoes? Where do my shoes belong?” This invocation is more than a practical query; it is an ontological call that activates the hermeneutical circle of meaning, a circle that is ultimately a construct of the Ego. The Ego, through its ekstatic elasticity, a manifestation of its being of denial, reaches out toward the potentialities of phenomena that signify the shoes' place of belonging, potentialities that are perceived and interpreted through its lens of attachment and denial. The response is not merely from the shoes as objects but from the entire relational context that constitutes their place, a context that is shaped and defined by the Ego. This reflects the Ego's mode of attunement, where being-with expresses being-in and being-as, unfolding the way phenomena disclose themselves in their interrelatedness, an interrelatedness that is ultimately a product of the Ego's activity.

The matter is this: phenomena gather together in the way they show themselves to me, as a manifestation of the Ego, and go to mean the way things are to be, a meaning that is constructed by the Ego. The call of the question, “Where are my shoes?” invites my, as a manifestation of the Ego, own way of engagement with the way in which beings show themselves to me as phenomena—that is, as a centering and decentering of phenomena, all interpreted and given significance by the Ego. If I am sitting on my couch watching a show, and I invoke the place where my shoes have a place to be, then the TV, the TV stand, the wall behind the TV and stand, the remote, the piece of mail on the stand in front of the TV, the rug, the coffee table, the armchair opposite me, the standing lamp, the small side table next to the armchair, the window, the framed pictures, all four walls, the ceiling—all these which do or do not fall into the center of my engagement on my way towards the place where my shoes have a place to be get decentered on the way to centering my engagement in the place of my shoes where I have oriented and attuned my whole way to be, a way to be that is shaped by the

Ego. And I stay in this way of searching, even while I fall out of the way I am in searching—a being-sitting-on-the-couch-being-scanning-while-being-sitting, held in threshold between being what I am being while being in the way of what it is I am to be, a threshold that is a manifestation of the Ego's liminality. All these phenomena show themselves to me in the special way that I, as a manifestation of the Ego, have called them to step forward to me. The call functions both as the modality of inquiry and the ontological opening through which the phenomenon can be disclosed, an opening that is framed and interpreted by the Ego. By calling out "Where are my shoes?", I attune myself not only to the subject of the inquiry but also to the conditions of engagement, conditions that are shaped by the Ego. The phenomena that step forward—be it the TV, the rug, or the door—do so in response to the call, each revealing aspects of their being that relate to my search, a search that is ultimately directed by the Ego.

This relational engagement exemplifies the Ego's method of navigating the world, a world that is constructed through its own activity. Phenomena are not isolated objects but relational entities woven into the fabric of our experience, an experience that is shaped and interpreted by the Ego. They stand as thresholds, enabling us, as manifestations of the Ego, to transition from one mode of being to another, transitions that are guided by the Ego's attachments and its denial of saturated emptiness. The way each phenomenon responds to the call illustrates its role in the broader context of our existence, an existence that is ultimately an illusion created by the Ego.

Had I, as a manifestation of the Ego, called for “fresh air,” then the way these phenomena would have responded to me, as interpreted by the Ego, would have been in the way they step forth into the center of my engagement and opened the way towards the window or the door. Had I called out for a snack, the way these phenomena would have shown themselves would have been the way towards the kitchen, the phenomena in the kitchen towards the place where snacks have their place to be, a place determined by the habits and patterns of the Ego. But in calling for my shoes, the TV steps forth and, in showing itself as a large rectangular, flat, black box with glass, projecting colorful flashes of people and places and things and events and actions, the way towards the place my shoes show their being comes to me through the potentiality of my shoes’ being, a potentiality that is perceived and interpreted by the Ego.

The TV, as perceived by the Ego, shows me that it has its own way of being —changed (channels), being turned on/off, being watched, being adjusted. Further still, the TV shows me that it has the kind of being that sits on a stand, on a stand that stands on the floor, a being that holds a piece of mail,

and stands against a wall. Most importantly, though, the TV stand shows me that it stands on the floor by a wall and participates in the same kind of being that my shoes do (on the floor), as interpreted by the Ego. The way the TV stand shows me that it has the kind of being that I call to and shows me that it has the kind of being that looks out for (centering and decentering along the way) what calls back out to me about the whereabouts-being of my shoes, a process of interpretation that is guided by the Ego.

The place my shoes are, at least, as perceived by the Ego, is that there is a way from here to the place my shoes are to allow next what is to be, a "way" and a "to be" that are determined by the Ego. As such, I, as a manifestation of the Ego, go about along this way to my shoes. Thus, the TV stand can step out to me as the way into the situational context, into centered articulation, a context and articulation that are constructed by the Ego. It falls back, out from centered articulation, no less to express the way still (in a standing-about, as it were), continuing to show the kind of being that belongs to my shoes, as interpreted by the Ego. Meanwhile, the rug, which also has the kind of being that allows me to get involved in the place where my shoes have their being, steps forth and shows to me a place where, most often, shoes do not belong, but where, nonetheless, because of the soft and warm furs of the fabric, bare feet do belong. This interplay of belonging and not-belonging is a product of the Ego's ongoing interpretation and categorization of phenomena.

Thus, the being of bare feet steps forth and responds to me, as a manifestation of the Ego, with the many possibilities of its being—such as how my shoes come off usually before I step onto the rug and, as such, my bare feet. Scanning through those possibilities, I, as a manifestation of the Ego, find it includes the notion of proximity—the specific proximity of the house entry door to the rug, in between which is the left-hand side of the door, where is a place where my shoes belong, a place determined by the habits and patterns of the Ego. I fall into a place where my shoes show themselves to me, stepping out along this way until my shoes, where they may belong, contribute in their potential place to be, a potentiality perceived and interpreted by the Ego, to the whole gathering about of phenomena around about the being of my shoes, a gathering that is orchestrated by the Ego.

In this state of potentialities, as interpreted by the Ego, I find myself in situational circumstances to be (the whole nexus gathering itself, this “me,” which is a construct of the Ego), in which each phenomenon goes to mean, by showing themselves each to me, as a manifestation of the Ego, in their own way of being from the ways they can be and are being, calling out to

me that the place my shoes are to be is in the place that they belong, a belonging that is defined by the Ego. My shoes respond to me from their place of belonging—they draw me towards them, having drawn me towards them in drawing me through the whole matrix of articulations that make up the way there, each of which expresses a change, a transition, a transformation, a translation, a movement in the articulation of an instance, an instantiation of being, all shaped and interpreted by the Ego. The drawing towards the place to be of my shoes, in all the calling, responding, opening, centering, decentering ways to be my shoes, is the definition of the belonging of my shoes, a belonging that is constructed by the Ego. My shoes belong near the door, to the left, in front of the rug, in the room with the TV, and so on. And the definition is the around-about of where my shoes are around—the around-about about which the being of it is being and/or to be around, a being and a to-be that are determined by the Ego.

Meaning, a hermeneutical circle, an enclosing unfolding of relative being in which each phenomenon participating points to where I, as a manifestation of the Ego, am to go, draws me closer and closer, further away from the open spanning array of initial possible ways to go, in the way that they go to mean, in their own way of showing me—the belonging of my shoes, a belonging that is determined by the Ego. This hermeneutical circle, however, is not a neutral process but is shaped by the Ego's being of denial, creating a closed system that reinforces its own illusions. The drawing is the calling out to me, moreover, from the being of my shoes, as interpreted by the Ego. The way in which they belong is the situational circumstances, circumstances that are defined and given meaning by the Ego. “Situational circumstances” for the reason that, for example, in one culture, shoes belong by the door in the front room, and in another, they belong on your feet. The situational circumstances are the ways the phenomena constituting the situation circumstantially go, pointing towards the belonging of the shoes in the way they show where the shoes belong in the way they can or do belong, all within the framework of the Ego's interpretation.

And so, the situational circumstances—really, genealogically related phenomena enclosing the relationship between one’s self, an illusory self that is a construct of the Ego, and that to which they call to—show themselves to me in their way of focus, closing further and further, my engagement in and around the place where my shoes are being and to be, the way in which my shoes belong as a communion between my self, a manifestation of the Ego, engaging as a nexus around about which the phenomena disclose their being, a disclosure that is shaped and interpreted by the Ego. And that phenomenal place of being, where I, as a manifestation

of the Ego, set myself to be, extending me from my shoes—this “myself,” an illusory construct, attuning to the call, calling back to me from my shoes like an antenna tuning itself to radio waves. This "tuning" is a manifestation of the Ego's ekstatic elasticity. As such, I, as a manifestation of the Ego, am in communication with my shoes, having only once invoked their way of being by way of the opening of the question, “Where are my shoes?” in being drawn through the matrix of articulations of the meaning of the way of the being of my shoes and how they are to be (the place my shoes have a belonging in the given situational circumstantiality). This matrix of articulations that go to mean the way to the being of the being of my shoes expresses the structural character of temporality, as experienced through the Ego.

Temporality here, as understood through the Ego, is not a linear sequence but a multidimensional unfolding of potentialities, potentialities that are perceived and interpreted through its being of denial. The Ego navigates this temporal landscape by elastically extending itself toward the possible ways of being that the phenomena present, an extension that is driven by its attachments and its need to create a stable self. Each articulation in the matrix represents a temporal moment where past experiences, present engagement, and future possibilities converge, all shaped and interpreted by the Ego. The search for the shoes becomes a temporal act, where memory and projection intertwine, allowing the Ego to exist within and as the flow of time, an illusory flow that it itself constructs.

This communication between my being, as a manifestation of the Ego, and the being of my shoes, as interpreted by the Ego, is mediated by temporality. Temporality, for the Ego, is not merely a sequence of moments but the very structure through which we engage with phenomena, a structure that is created and maintained by its being of denial. It is through temporality that the Ego can project itself ahead, recalling past experiences and anticipating future possibilities, all within the framework of its illusory self-creation. The matrix of articulations—the centering and decentering of phenomena, the calls and responses—constitutes our temporal existence, as experienced through the Ego. Each phenomenon that steps forth does so within a temporal horizon, contributing to the unfolding of our being-in-the-world, a being-in-the-world that is ultimately a construct of the Ego. The search for my shoes becomes a temporal journey, where each step is imbued with meaning derived from past habits, present needs, and future intentions, all shaped and interpreted by the Ego.

Say that when I, as a manifestation of the Ego, call out to my shoes, calling “Where are my shoes?”, I get no response at all. That is, no phenomenon steps up, shows itself to me as the way to be in the way of the being of my

shoes, as interpreted by the Ego. “Nothing,” therefore, comes to mean the place where my shoes belong. What then should happen? Does this mean I should now lose all experience? Should “nothing” mean the being of my shoes and their way to be means, really, the nothing of nothingness? Surely it is not the void? This "nothing" is not the nothing-there of Saturated emptiness, but rather a "nothing" that arises within the framework of the Ego's expectations and interpretations.

Only inasmuch as the call to sleep is concerned, a call that can temporarily suspend the Ego's activity, should I go on centering and decentering, pinpointing the focus of the signaling (the calling and responding), until I am made alert to the sharply defined enclosure of focus being—searching for the being of my shoes. Should I find no such articulation of the being of my shoes, then depending upon the larger enclosing call of its way to be, a call interpreted and given meaning by the Ego, the call to my shoes stands as its own pointer that shows itself to mean the way to that being and its way to be—such as going to the store, meeting a friend, going to work. Each of these is embedded in larger calls, such as looking fashionable, enjoying the night, producing something meaningful—each of which has their own wider, more prolonged, complex ways of showing, ways that are also shaped and interpreted by the Ego. Reaching closer and closer to that which calls in calling all together, a call that ultimately emanates from the Ego: Belonging is the place where I, as a manifestation of the Ego, always am to be in being, my ownmost being, I—this being here, right here, my existence, an existence that is a construct of the Ego.

And so, my way of being, in the way I, as a manifestation of the Ego, am being-to-be, is genealogically phenomenological—being temporally grounded in a matrix of articulations closing and opening smaller and wider, holding me in any way to be in being at all—except for in dreamless sleep or coma, in which no phenomena, as interpreted by the Ego, step forward and present no anchoring articulations around about which there can be a way of being about which to be, lacking definition, which passes by atemporally, “within no time,” until again temporality, as constructed by the Ego, begins hanging us around something some way again, to be. This experience of dreamless sleep highlights the essential role of temporality, as created by the Ego, in constituting the illusory self. Without the engagement with phenomena, interpreted and given meaning by the Ego, the sense of self dissolves. Temporality, as an existential structure, enables the Ego to maintain its illusion of identity through the elastic ekstatic engagement with phenomena. It is through temporal articulations that the illusory self emerges, persists, and evolves, embodying both change and continuity

within the hermeneutical circle of being, a circle that is a construct of the Ego.

In dreamless sleep, where no phenomena, as interpreted by the Ego, step forward and no anchoring articulations are present, we experience a suspension of temporality, as constructed by the Ego. This state highlights the fundamental role that temporality plays in our existence as manifestations of the Ego. It is through the temporal structuring, a creation of the Ego, of our engagement with phenomena that we maintain our sense of self, an illusory self, and our illusion of continuity of being. This instance of dreamless sleep reveals a crucial insight about temporality's relationship to the Ego. The absence of temporal experience in dreamless sleep is not merely an interruption of time but rather reveals temporality's fundamental structure as the framework through which the Ego articulates meaningful presence, a presence that is ultimately a construct. During dreamless sleep, when phenomena cease to step forward and present anchoring articulations, we encounter a state where the Ego's activity of creating an illusory self through engagement with being is temporarily suspended.

This helps us understand that temporality, as constructed by the Ego, is not primarily about sequence but about the articulation of meaning through engaged presence, an engagement that is driven by its being of denial. Consider how our temporal experience operates when awake: we do not simply move through time like objects on a conveyor belt. Rather, we engage with phenomena through what we might call circles of focus—patterns of centering and decentering through which phenomena reveal themselves in their meaningful relationships, relationships that are interpreted and given significance by the Ego.

Each phenomenon that steps forth, as interpreted by the Ego, does so within multiple temporal contexts simultaneously: First, there is immediate presence—the way the phenomenon shows itself in direct engagement, an engagement that is shaped by the Ego. Second, there is situational context—how the phenomenon relates to other phenomena in its current field of meaning, a field that is constructed by the Ego. Third, there is potential development—how the phenomenon opens possibilities for future engagement, possibilities that are perceived and interpreted through the lens of the Ego's desires and attachments. These circles are not separate temporal dimensions but rather aspects of how phenomena achieve meaningful presence through the Ego's engagement. When all these circles cease in dreamless sleep, we encounter not merely an absence of consciousness but a glimpse into the fundamental structure of the Ego, revealing its dependence on these circles for the creation and maintenance of the illusory self.

This understanding of temporality aligns with the concept of Reflexive Stabilization, as it operates within the framework of the Ego. Our experience of time is not simply a matter of external measurement but arises from the Ego's own engaged activity, an activity that is driven by its being of denial. The Ego generates temporal moments through its interactions with phenomena, creating the illusion of linear time while maintaining the elasticity of temporal experience, an elasticity that reflects its fundamental instability.

The Ego's temporality is characterized by this Reflexive Stabilization. We, as manifestations of the Ego, maintain a semblance of coherence of identity, an illusion of a stable self, through change by continuously engaging with phenomena, projecting ourselves into future possibilities while retaining the residuals of past engagements, all within the framework of its being of denial. This process allows the Ego to exist ekstatically, stretching beyond the present moment to encompass the multidimensional aspects of its being, a multidimensionality that is ultimately a product of its own activity.

At this juncture, it is prudent to consider potential counterarguments that might be raised against the framework of the Ego, as presented in The Analytic of Transliminality. Notably, philosophers like Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Daniel Dennett offer perspectives that could challenge aspects of this ontological model.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty might argue that the concept of the Ego, with its emphasis on ekstatic elasticity and its being of denial, blurs the line between subject and object by overemphasizing the role of mental constructs and underemphasizing the concrete, embodied experience of perception. For Merleau-Ponty, subjectivity and objectivity emerge through lived, bodily interactions with the world. An overly elastic conception of being, such as that presented in The Analytic of Transliminality, risks losing this groundedness in the flesh of the world, the intertwining of the perceiver and the perceived. Merleau-Ponty emphasizes the primacy of perception, where the body is not just an object in the world but the very means through which the world is disclosed. The body is our general medium for having a world. By focusing on the Ego and its elastic ekstatic engagement, one might neglect the fundamental role of the body as the site of perception and meaning-making.

In responding to Merleau-Ponty's critique, we must acknowledge that The Analytic of Transliminality, with its focus on the Ego, shares with his phenomenology a commitment to understanding the relational character of being. However, where Merleau-Ponty privileges the embodied encounter as the primary site of meaning-making, The Analytic of Transliminality seeks to

extend this encounter into the multidimensional elasticity of temporal and existential structures, as interpreted and constructed by the Ego. It is not a denial of embodiment but an expansion of its ontological significance, recognizing that embodiment itself is experienced and interpreted through the lens of the Ego. The Ego does not abandon the body but recognizes that our engagement with phenomena transcends the immediate physical interaction, as this interaction is mediated and given meaning by the Ego. For instance, when searching for my shoes, the act involves not only the tactile and visual perception but also memory, anticipation, and cultural practices—all of which are integral to the experience yet extend beyond the immediate bodily interaction, and all of which are shaped and interpreted by the Ego. Moreover, the concept of being-as, as it manifests in the Ego's ontological mimicry, complements Merleau-Ponty's notion of the intertwining of the perceiver and the perceived. By acknowledging that the Ego becomes what it engages, we affirm the embodied nature of experience while also recognizing the transcendence inherent in our engagements, a transcendence that is ultimately a manifestation of its being of denial. The Ego navigates the world through a dynamic interplay of embodiment and transcendence, honoring the depth of Merleau-Ponty's insights while advancing the discussion into new ontological territories, specifically concerning the illusory nature of the self and the fundamental groundlessness of saturated emptiness.

Philosopher and cognitive scientist Daniel Dennett might challenge the notion of the Ego, as presented in The Analytic of Transliminality, by questioning the reality of the phenomena described. Dennett is known for his critique of what he calls the "Cartesian Theater"—the idea that there is a central place in the mind where "everything comes together" for consciousness. He argues for a materialist and functional account of consciousness, where mental states are understood in terms of physical processes in the brain. From Dennett's perspective, the Ego might be seen as invoking a kind of dualism or mysticism that lacks empirical grounding. The concepts of elastic ekstatic engagement, hermeneutical circles, and the Ego itself might be critiqued as relying on introspective, unverifiable phenomena that do not align with a scientific understanding of consciousness.

In addressing Dennett's challenge, it is essential to clarify that The Analytic of Transliminality, with its focus on the Ego, does not posit a metaphysical dualism but seeks to explore the structures of experience as they present themselves, structures that are ultimately shaped and interpreted by the Ego. While Dennett emphasizes the physical processes underlying consciousness, The Analytic of Transliminality focuses on the

phenomenological aspects—the way the Ego experiences the world, a way that is characterized by its being of denial. The Ego is not an entity separate from the physical but an articulation of how we, as manifestations of this being, engage with the world through what we call consciousness, an engagement that creates the illusion of a separate self. It acknowledges that our experiences are mediated by brain processes but emphasizes that understanding consciousness solely through its physical substrates may overlook the richness of lived experience, an experience that is constructed by the Ego. Furthermore, the approach of The Analytic of Transliminality aligns with the enactive view of cognition, which posits that perception and action are fundamentally intertwined and that cognition arises through dynamic interaction with the environment. This perspective bridges the gap between phenomenology and cognitive science, suggesting that an exploration of consciousness must account for both the physical processes and the experiential structures, structures that are ultimately a product of the Ego. The Ego's being of denial is not in opposition to the enactive view of cognition. The being of denial is the structure through which we enact our being. By integrating these insights, the Ego can be understood as a model that complements rather than contradicts scientific accounts. It provides a framework for exploring the qualitative aspects of consciousness, aspects that are shaped by the Ego's activity, that are often neglected in purely materialist approaches, enriching our understanding of what it means to be a conscious being-in-the-world, a being that is ultimately an illusion created by the Ego's denial of saturated emptiness.

Returning to our exploration, temporality, as understood through the Ego, is, as such, the individuating articulation of expressive being, an articulation that is a manifestation of its being of denial. The meaning of the being of temporality is one of the instantiations of being, as interpreted by the Ego, and not merely the transformation of being—as has been theorized and scientifically investigated hitherto. What, indeed, does make mathematical time work? 1, 2, 3, 4… The mistake is made by assuming that because counting contains the definition of sequential order, the sequential change is inherent in the numbers themselves. Numbers stack and unstack; however, the way in which numbers show themselves in the instantiations of quantity is a given, and we, as manifestations of the Ego, engage them linearly sequentially due to the structure of our temporal consciousness, a structure that is created by the Ego to maintain the illusion of a stable and continuous self.

The essence of phenomena, which makes the meaning of our being, as experienced through the Ego, is rooted in their capacity to disclose themselves in their own unique way, a way that is perceived and interpreted

by the Ego. Each phenomenon embodies potentialities that contribute to the Ego's own potential ways to be, potentialities that are shaped by its attachments and its being of denial. When the call is answered, the communication reaches a momentary resolution, yet the dynamic interplay of calls and responses, orchestrated by the Ego, continues as we navigate our existence, an existence that is ultimately an illusion.

When I, as a manifestation of the Ego, find my shoes and put them on, it is not merely a repetitive practice but an engagement with habitual patterns that shape the Ego, patterns that reinforce the illusion of a stable self. The call of my shoes recedes until circumstances, as interpreted by the Ego, summon it again. These habitual engagements form a residual temporality that enables complex genealogical existentialities, allowing the Ego to engage with being beyond the immediate scope of given possibilities, creating a sense of continuity and meaning within its constructed world.

Let’s take "human history," as we call it in the West, a construct that arises from the Ego. The habit of people everywhere, a habit that is a manifestation of the Ego, seems to be to share the aboutness of "bygone" times. We speak of "lives lived" and call forward the residual residue of articulations that seem not to have the ability to show up the same again. We say that "people evolve," "people move on," "things come and go," "all things are impermanent," and "you may never step into the same river twice." This residue is available in every phenomenon, as interpreted by the Ego. It is a testament to the fundamental impermanence that the Ego attempts to deny through its creation of a stable and enduring self.

Any phenomenon, as perceived and interpreted by the Ego, carries in its being a way for us, as manifestations of the Ego, to "return" to it, a return that is made possible by the Ego's memory and its creation of temporal continuity. The individuating effect that temporality, as constructed by the Ego, has is the residual effect of every phenomenon because every phenomenon is the instantiation of being-being-articulation, as understood and interpreted by the Ego. That is to say, every phenomenon shows its way of being to us, as manifestations of the Ego; it shows also the ways for it to be, ways that are perceived and defined by the Ego. Phenomena instantiate in the way they call and respond, being what it is in its uttermost being, as interpreted by the Ego, while being what it can be, which is the horizon of phenomena enclosing an attuning circle of meaning with it, a circle that is a construct of the Ego.

The Ego is also to evade Being itself by going undetected, a manifestation of its fundamental being of denial. As if part of its being is intentionally getting lost, secrecy, hiding, puzzling, covering up, riddling, representing, lying,

manipulating, making illusory, making fictional—specifically so as to maintain the illusion of a stable and enduring self. The kind of being that cares and can care about living, breathing, and dying—existing, a care that is ultimately a care for the preservation of the illusory self. We, as manifestations of the Ego, must have the temporal character we do, a character constructed by the Ego, so that we can be the way we exist, an existence that is shaped by the Ego. That too is the meaning of our being, as constructed by the Ego: to be is to exist, an existence that is characterized by the illusion of a separate self. Being and existence feel curious to us just as much as do temporality, being, nothing, living, dying, etc., because they are all filtered through and interpreted by the Ego. Our temporal character, a construct of the Ego, enables us to engage in the hermeneutical process of understanding and interpretation. It is through temporality, as experienced through the Ego, that we can reflect on our past, comprehend our present, and project into our future, all within the framework of the illusory self. This temporal awareness is integral to our being-with-in-and-as, allowing us to synthesize experiences and construct meaningful narratives of our existence, narratives that reinforce the Ego's denial of saturated emptiness. Without temporality, as constructed by the Ego, the coherence of our illusory identity and the continuity of our being, as perceived by the Ego, would be impossible.

And to what do we, as manifestations of the Ego, point in naming "what exists?" When the question is posed—Does a dog exist? Does a house exist? Does justice exist? Does the whole cosmos exist?—the response would be, "Yes, each exists," an affirmation that arises from the Ego's need to solidify and categorize the flow of being. In naming what exists, we participate in the ontological act of disclosure, as mediated by the Ego. We bring phenomena into focus, assigning meaning and affirming their apparent being within our relational context, a context that is constructed by the Ego. This act is not merely descriptive but constitutive; it shapes our engagement with the world and influences how phenomena reveal themselves to us, a revelation that is always filtered through the lens of the Ego. The Ego, through language and intentionality, co-creates an illusory reality by articulating the being of beings within the hermeneutical circle, a circle that is a product of its own activity.

So, what—are Being and existence the same, as understood by the Ego? For that matter, what about reality, as perceived and interpreted by the Ego? But the meaning of the being of Being has already shown itself to us, through the lens of the Ego. The showing ways are showing ways, as interpreted by the Ego. Essentially, the better, closer, or more appropriate term for Being over existence or even reality is the eternal—and even still,

that is much too spatial and timely; timely belonging to us, as manifestations of the Ego, and spatial, belonging to the Ego's need to create a stable and defined world. These terms are all ultimately inadequate to capture the true nature of Being, which is saturated emptiness.

Where does Being, as conceived by the Ego, have space for the blinking of blinking? Or, better yet, for deletion? Being, as interpreted by the Ego, appears to delete, and in deleting, the Ego shows itself in its being of denial. This is to recognize that Being, as understood through the lens of the Ego, does not have only the character of pure disclosure—this Heidegger even would write and speak of at length, for example, in his descriptions of ἀλήθεια (truth). The deletion that Being enacts, as perceived by the Ego, is not mere negation or absence but rather a necessary aspect of Being's dynamic self-disclosure, a disclosure that is filtered through the Ego. When Being appears to delete, it creates a specific kind of opening, allowing phenomena to step forth while simultaneously receding. This dual movement of emergence and recession, as interpreted by the Ego, establishes the fundamental rhythm through which Being manifests itself, a manifestation that is ultimately an appearance within the framework of the Ego.

Consider how phenomena relate as being brought forward by a calling, a calling that is a manifestation of the Ego's engagement with being. Each phenomenon that steps forth, as perceived by the Ego, does so against a background of what has receded. This recession is not elimination but rather creates the context within which new phenomena can meaningfully emerge, a context that is structured by the Ego. Through this interplay of presence and absence, deletion becomes not the opposite of disclosure but rather an essential aspect of how Being articulates itself, an articulation that is perceived and interpreted by the Ego. The Ego's unique capacity lies in its ability to navigate this deletion not by resisting it but by maintaining itself, an illusory self, across these moments of emergence and recession. It achieves this through what we might call engaged distance—participating in phenomena while maintaining the independence necessary to persist through Being's apparent deletion, an independence that is a product of its being of denial. This explains why both pure presence (traditional metaphysics) and pure absence (nihilism) fail to capture the full nature of Being's self-disclosure, as understood through the lens of the Ego. They fail to recognize the fundamental role of the Ego in shaping our experience of presence, absence, and the dynamic interplay between them.

The Ego, in its phenomenal expression, often referred to as consciousness, appears to have no inherent content of its own; it is like a hole through which any phenomenon of Being, including the phenomena of the being of

Being, can filter through, as perceived and interpreted by the Ego. This ties nicely into Heidegger’s Care, getting involved in the being of Being through the ahead-of-itself-alongside-the-world, always already by being involved in the self. However, Heidegger's framework fails to capture the fact that the Ego's "to be," which is to exist, is to exist temporarily, with a sense of groundlessness, a groundlessness that arises from the Ego's denial of saturated emptiness. It is important to note, though, that while the Ego is grounded in Saturated emptiness, that the Ego is not itself Saturated emptiness. Rather, the Ego is denial, the denial of Saturated emptiness.

Our groundlessness, as experienced through the Ego, is not a void but a space of potentiality, a potentiality that is perceived and interpreted through its being of denial. It is within this openness that the Ego can elastically extend itself toward new ways of being, an extension that is driven by its attachments and its need to create a stable self. The emptiness of the Ego, an emptiness that is a manifestation of its denial of saturated emptiness, allows for flexibility, adaptation, and the continuous redefinition of our existence, an illusory existence constructed by the Ego. This aligns with the concept of being-as, where the Ego can become other than what it is without losing its ownmost self, an illusory self that it constantly maintains through its activity. The Ego thrives in this groundlessness, finding meaning through its engagements and the ever-unfolding possibilities of existence, possibilities that are ultimately shaped by its being of denial.

This residue signifies the remnancy between different enclosures, as interpreted by the Ego—the traces of past engagements that inform present possibilities, possibilities that are shaped by its being of denial. Memory, as an expression of temporal remnancy, allows the Ego to carry forward the meanings and relationships established through prior engagements, creating an illusion of continuity. It is not a static repository but an active process of re-articulation, where past, present, and future coalesce in the Ego's ongoing existence, an existence that is characterized by its being of denial. This underscores the importance of Reflexive Stabilization, where the Ego, which some might equate to consciousness, depends upon the production of "moments" that shape its way of being, moments that are constructed by the Ego in its attempt to create a stable and meaningful world.